

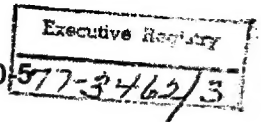


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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503



NOV 15 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND  
ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Next Steps in the President's Reporting  
Burden Reduction Program

The President has made a major commitment to reducing the burden of paperwork and red tape on the American people. As we discussed with you at the Cabinet meeting on October 12, 1977, he expects that key agency policy officials will work with the Office of Management and Budget in implementing his program. Not only must we move forward on Phase II of the Administration's paperwork reduction program, but we need to take steps to implement the Paperwork Commission's recommendations and carry out the President's initiatives to streamline grant-in-aid administration.

Therefore, I would appreciate your personal attention to the following matters:

- Status of paperwork reduction. Please provide by November 22, 1977, a report of your agency's achievements in reducing the public reporting burden using the attached format. I would also appreciate your personal appraisal of the progress made by your agency toward the goals you set out in your letter to the Director in March 1977. Finally, we need you to identify the policy official accountable to you for carrying out the President's paperwork reduction program. Numerous changes have occurred since you last provided us this information.
- New approaches to paperwork reduction. A paper outlining revised policies for the control of paperwork is attached. We are scheduling a meeting with department and agency representatives on November 29, 1977 to discuss this strategy.

(ENCLOSURE)

OMB

If you have any specific questions before the meeting, please call either Wayne Granquist (395-3423) or Stan Morris (395-6176).

Thank you for your cooperation.

  
James T. McIntyre, Jr.  
Acting Director

Attachment

Accomplishments as of September 30, 1977

	<u>Number of Reports</u>	<u>Reporting Hour Burden</u>
Repetitive reports in use, 1/31/77		
Change in usage of reports and other corrections (+ or -) <u>1/</u>	_____	_____
Add: New reports added during period <u>2/</u>	_____	_____
Less: Reports eliminated during period <u>3/</u>		
Reductions in burden of reports continued in use <u>4/</u>	_____	_____
Repetitive reports in use, 9/30/77		

- 1/ Increases or decreases in reporting burden resulting from changed usage of report or other corrections should be listed as an attachment to this report. Listings of increases and decreases should be reported separately. Each listing should contain the OMB number, report title, and change in reporting hour burden.
- 2/ New reports introduced into use are to be listed as an attachment to the report. The listing should include OMB number, title of report, and reporting hour burden.

- 3/ Reports eliminated are to be listed as an attachment to the report. The listing should include OMB number, title of report, number of reporting hours.
- 4/ Reductions in burden of reports continued in use are to be listed as an attachment to the report. Include only reductions in burden resulting from actions taken to decrease burden. Reductions in burden from decline in usage or from new calculations of time required to complete a report are to be included in "Change in usage of reports and other corrections." The listing should include OMB number, title of report, and amount of decrease.

The overall goal of the President's Paperwork Reduction Program is to eliminate unnecessary paperwork burdens on the public while obtaining, in the least burdensome way, the data necessary for effective program management.

The strategy for carrying out this goal is fourfold:

1. Each department or agency head must be responsible for the paperwork impact of the agency's programs.
2. Public involvement in identifying existing or potentially unnecessary or confusing paperwork demands must be increased.
3. Duplicative and overlapping data requirements must be reduced through increased agency coordination.
4. Agency and OMB resources should be directed toward identifying and then solving major problems.

Proposals for implementing this strategy include:

I. Implementation of the Federal Reports Act

- A. Goals and Ceilings. The head of each department or agency will establish FY 1978 goals for reducing the agency's burden of public reporting, as measured in reporting hours.

Ceilings on the number of reports and on the hours of reporting burden will be established for each department or agency. Each department and agency head will report progress toward the achievement of the agency's goals quarterly to OMB. The first report, covering the quarter ending December 31, 1977, will be due on January 15, 1978.

Ceilings will be communicated to departments and agencies together with guidelines for implementing the President's program by December 15, 1977.

Recognizing that goals and ceilings are crude instruments based upon imperfect reporting measures, an interagency task force will be established to consider alternative administrative tools to

discipline the growth of public reporting. The task force will report its findings and recommendations by March 31, 1978.

**B. Decentralization of Clearance Responsibilities**

Departments and agencies will be given new responsibilities in the clearance of proposed reports. The purpose of decentralization will be (1) to assure that the head of each department and agency is responsible for appraising the agency's need for information relative to the agency's burden reduction goals and (2) to concentrate OMB attention on critical reporting burden problems and the practical utility of information already collected by the Federal Government.

OMB, in coordination with departments and agencies, will develop agency guidelines for reviewing requests for clearance to collect information from the public. These guidelines will contain specific provisions concerning public participation in the review process.

All proposed reports will continue to be forwarded to OMB. This will assure that there is a single inventory of all reports under the Federal Reports Act. However, except in unusual cases, it is the intent of OMB to accept the review made by the department or agency under the procedural guidelines for all requests below specified threshold criteria.

Threshold criteria will be specified. Consideration is being given to (a) using the number of responses, (b) the number of hours of reporting burden, (c) the time required by a respondent to complete a report, or (d) a combination of these measures.

OMB's role will be to review agency compliance with the agreed upon procedural guidelines.

**C. Lead Agencies**

In order to assure greater coordination of government-wide information collection activities, OMB intends to assign clearance requests to lead agencies for review. Where multiple agencies collect data based on the legal authority of a central enforcement agency, the lead agency may be delegated responsibility for overall clearance review and for maintaining a central inventory of all relevant reports.

For example, the Justice Department, which is responsible for the enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, would review all Title VI compliance reports, regardless of originating agency. The reports would be assigned a Justice/OMB clearance number. No separate reporting requirements under Title VI would be approved by OMB.

Similarly, under this model all reports relating to enforcement of equal employment opportunity would be reviewed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

## II. Paperwork Commission Recommendations

### A. Schedule for Responding to Recommendations

OMB is responsible for reporting to the President and the Congress at least semi-annually on the status of recommendations of the Commission on Federal Paperwork. The first report is due in March 1978. Each department and agency will receive a listing (or listings) of those recommendations which apply to it. The department or agency will be asked to submit a proposed schedule for responding to the listed recommendations. The responses will be forwarded to OMB after they have been approved by the department or agency head. In addition, a status report will be filed with OMB as part of the quarterly progress report on reporting burden reduction.

B. Departments and agencies will make every effort to respond positively to each CFP recommendation. If this is not possible, departments and agencies will seek alternative means to secure the objectives of the CFP recommendations.

C. OMB will analyze agency responses to CFP recommendations and may consult with individual agencies before formulating the statutorily required semi-annual report to Congress and the President.

## III. Grant-in-Aid Reporting

Particular attention will be paid to grant-in-aid application and reporting requirements in FY 1979. As outlined in the Presidential directive of September 9, 1977, all departments and agencies are

responsible for (a) the timely distribution of reporting forms; (b) the active solicitation of comments on proposed new application and reporting forms from users and other interested parties; (c) the elimination of duplicative requests for information; (d) the use of standard OMB application and financial reporting forms (States and local governments must comply with Circular No. A-102 while all non-profit institutions must comply with Circular No. A-110); (e) the establishment of cooperative data collection programs with State and local governments; (f) the elimination of multiple signatures from the State or local chief executive officer on a single reporting or application submission; (g) the elimination of more than one original and two copies of any application, financial or performance report; and (h) the establishment of new phase-in procedures for revised regulations.

Agencies will be asked to review existing procedures and make appropriate modifications to implement the President's directive. To assure the performance of this special review, all existing clearances of grant-in-aid reporting requirements will expire June 30, 1978 unless specifically rejustified in this review.

#### IV. Executive Branch Reports to Congress

In addition to reducing the public reporting burden, the President has asked that we reduce the number of recurring reports the Executive Branch is required to send to Congress. OMB will prepare instructions for agency use in reviewing existing reporting requirements. The purpose of the review will be to develop recommendations for the elimination, consolidation, or other modifications of existing reports. Agencies will be asked to work closely with the GAO which is pursuing a similar objective with each individual Congressional committee.

#### V. Reducing Paperwork Burdens Associated with Regulations

OMB has recently circulated a draft Executive Order for improving regulatory practices. The purpose of the Order is to prescribe common-sense management principles for agency regulatory procedures, increase public participation in the development of regulations and assure adequate consideration of the consequences of new



regulations before they are issued. In particular, the Order will require agencies to assess and minimize regulatory paperwork burdens. This requirement should be taken into account as agencies develop their FY 1978 burden reduction goals and revise internal agency procedures to comply with the new Order.

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